

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

**This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:**

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

1.-12. (canceled)

13. (withdrawn-currently amended): A method of preparing thea *Mycobacterium* promoter of claim 23 ~~expression system for high throughput screening and developing inhibitors against mycobacteria under low carbon source~~, said process comprising the steps of:

(a) isolating said promoter from *Mycobacterium* DNA ~~and characterizing a 200 bp promoter sequence having SEQ ID NO. 2 from nucleotide sequence of 1.5 kb DNA fragment upstream of *M.tuberculosis* gene *relA/spoT*,~~

(b) ligating the isolated promoter sequence of step (a) into a plasmid vector ~~vector~~ pSAK12, and

(c) ~~studying the expression of the promoter sequence under low carbon source or carbon starved conditions.~~

14. (withdrawn-currently amended): TheA process of as claimed in claim 13, wherein the *Mycobacterium* promoter is 2.5 fold ~~fold~~ more active in *M. Smegmatis* than the conventional heat shock protein promoter ( $P_{hsp60}$ ) ~~(heat shock protein promoter) promoter.~~

15. (withdrawn-currently amended): A process of expressing a reporter gene in *M. smegmatis* under carbon starved conditions, the process comprising the step of growing *M. smegmatis* containing the promoter of claim 28~~as claimed in claim 13~~, wherein the carbon source is, about 2.5 to 0.001% glucose~~is in the range of about 2.5 to 0.001%.~~

16. (withdrawn-currently amended): ~~The~~A process of~~as claimed in claim 15~~14, wherein the carbon source is about 2 to 0.02%~~glucose is in the range of about 2 to 0.02%.~~

17. (withdrawn-currently amended): ~~The~~A process of~~as claimed in claim 15~~13, wherein the percentage inhibition growth of the *M. smegmatis* mycobacteria in presence of the promoter and in presence of inhibitor ethambutol is reduced by~~in the range of about 6 to 25% by the presence of ethambutol in presence of 0.02 % glucose i.e under starved conditions.~~

18. (withdrawn-currently amended): ~~The~~A process of~~as claimed in claim 17~~, wherein the percentage inhibition growth of the *M. smegmatis* mycobacteria in the presence of the promoter and in presence of inhibitor ethambutol is reduced by~~in the range of about 7 to 21% by the presence of ethambutol in presence of 0.02 % glucose i.e under starved conditions.~~

19. (withdrawn-currently amended): ~~The~~A process of~~as claimed in claim 15~~13, wherein the percentage inhibition growth of the *M. smegmatis* mycobacteria in presence of the promoter

~~and in presence of inhibitor isoniazide is reduced by in the range of about 15 to 45% by the presence of isoniazid in presence of 0.02 % glucose i.e under starved conditions.~~

20. (withdrawn-currently amended): ~~The~~A process ~~of as claimed in claim 19~~, wherein ~~the percentage inhibition growth of the *M. smegmatis* mycobacteria in presence of the promoter and in presence of inhibitor isoniazide is reduced by in the range of about 18 to 40 % in the presence of isoniazid in presence of 0.02 % glucose i.e under starved conditions.~~

21. (withdrawn-currently amended): ~~The~~A process ~~of as claimed in claim 1513~~, wherein ~~the percentage inhibition growth of the *M. smegmatis* mycobacteria in presence of the promoter and in presence of inhibitor rifampicin is reduced by in the range of about 20 to 45% by the presence of rifampicin in presence of 0.02 % glucose i.e under starved conditions.~~

22. (withdrawn-currently amended): ~~The~~A process ~~of as claimed in claim 21~~, wherein ~~the percentage inhibition growth of the *M. smegmatis* mycobacteria in presence of the promoter and in presence of inhibitor rifampicin is reduced by in the range of about 21 to 41% by the presence of rifampicin in presence of 0.02 % glucose i.e under starved conditions.~~

23. (new) A *Mycobacterium* promoter, wherein the promoter is stable in *M. smegmatis* and *E. coli*, and consists essentially of the 200 base pair fragment upstream and adjacent to the *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* relA/SpoT gene.

24. (new) The *Mycobacterium* promoter of claim 23, wherein the promoter is operatively linked to a reporter gene.

25. (new) The *Mycobacterium* promoter of claim 24, wherein said reporter gene is LacZ.

26. (new) The *Mycobacterium* promoter of claim 24, wherein said reporter gene is xylE.

27. (new) The *Mycobacterium* promoter of claim 24, wherein the promoter is 2.5 fold more active in *M. smegmatis* than the heat shock protein promoter (P<sub>hsp60</sub>).

28 (new) The *Mycobacterium* promoter of claim 24, wherein the promoter is further contained in a plasmid with an Ampicillin or Kanamycin resistance marker.

29. (new) The *Mycobacterium* promoter of claim 23, wherein the promoter consists of SEQ ID NO:2.